

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUEBEC 00073 230330Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COME-00 EB-08 FCC-01 CIAE-00 INR-07  
NSAE-00 OTPE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /037 W  
-----230333 006023 /64

P R 222045Z FEB 77  
FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 901  
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY  
AMCONSUL MONTREAL  
AMCONSUL TORONTO POUCH

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, ETEL, CA  
SUBJECT: QUEBEC TO BOYCOTT MEETING ON COMMUNICATIONS

1. QUEBEC COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER LOUIS O'NEILL ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY 21 THAT GOQ WILL BOYCOTT FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL MEETING OF COMMUNICATIONS MINISTERS PLANNED FOR MARCH 29-30 IN EDMONTON. HE SAID MEETING WOULD BE WASTE OF TIME FOR QUEBEC BECAUSE OTTAWA REFUSES TO CHANGE ITS POSITION IN A CONTINUE DISPUTE OVER JURISDICTION OVER COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PROVINCE. QUEBEC HAS CLAIMED PRIMARY JURISDICTION OVER BROADCASTING, CABLE DISTRIBUTION, AND BELL TELEPHONE CLAIMING THESE MATTERS AFFECT CULTURAL. AS O'NEILL REITERATED YESTERDAY, QUEBEC BELIEVES THAT " WHEN YOU TOUCH COMMUNICATIONS, YOU TOUCH CULTURE." QUEBEC FEELS BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT OF 1867, WHICH GIVES OTTAWA CONTROL OVER COMMUNICATIONS, IS INADEQUATE TO DETERMINE JURISDICTION IN MODERN TIMES.

2. O'NEILL STATED THAT GOQ HAS NOTHING TO GAIN BY ATTENDING CONFERENCES UNTIL JURISDICTIONS HAVE BEEN DECIDED; OR GOC AGREES TO QUEBEC'S POINT OF VIEW. ONE ASPECT OF THE CASE- CABLE TV-IS BEFORE CANADIAN SUPREME COURT NOW.

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3. COMMENT: ISSUE HAS LONG BEEN A POINT OF FRICTION BETWEEN OTTAWA AND QUEBEC. IN JULY OF 1975 , FORMER LIBERAL MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, JEAN PAUL L'ALLIER, STORMED OUT OF A MEETING OVER THE SAME ISSUE. BOTH L'ALLIER AND O'NEILL HAVE ARGUED THAT COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT IS INSEPARABLE FROM CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS IN THE

PROVINCIAL JURISDICTION. COUPLED WITH HIS REFERENCE TO OTTAWA  
AS "FOREIGN COUNTRY", O'NEILL'S ACTION IN REFUSING PARTICI-  
PATE IN FEDERAL PROVINCIAL MEETING REINFORCES HIS GROWING  
IMAGE AS THE HARDEST ANTI-OTTAWA HARD -LINER IN GOQ.  
MCNAMARA

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009